

Abstract

The present invention relates to a process for preparing a
5 low-odor hydrogel-forming acrylic acid polymer, which comprises
the steps of:

- a) preparing a polymeric hydrogel by free-radically polymerizing
a monomer composition comprising at least 50% by weight of
10 acrylic acid in an aqueous polymerization medium and
converting said hydrogel into a particulate hydrogel or into
hydrogel-forming powder; and optionally
- b) treating said particulate hydrogel or said hydrogel-forming
15 powder with a crosslinking substance which, actually or
latently, contain at least two functional groups capable of
reacting with the carboxyl groups on the addition polymer;

characterized by the acrylic acid used in step a) having a total
20 acrylic acid oligomer content of less than 500 ppm, preferably
not more than 400 ppm and especially not more than 300 ppm. Here
and hereinafter, all ppm units are by weight based on acrylic
acid. It is advantageous for the level of triacrylic acid
(compound I where $x = 2$) and higher oligomers of acrylic acid to
25 be less than 100 ppm, especially less than 50 ppm and
specifically less than 10 ppm.

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